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MEAT CONSUMPTION TRENDS IN PRINCIPAL COUNTRIES

Meat consumption rose in 1955 and 1956 in most countries of the world for which data or estimates are available. During 1955 consumption per person was relatively large in most of those countries, although as usual supplies per person varied greatly from country to country.

Generally, rising levels of consumption were the result of high consumer purchasing power and the availability of larger quantities of meat in the principal producing and importing countries. For several years there has been a steady increase in world meat production which has been greater percentagewise than the growth of the population.

After a very rapid recovery from low postwar years meat consumption in Western Europe continues its moderate advance of recent years. Oceania has increased meat utilization by 25 percent from the average of 1946-50. Consumption was lower than usual in several countries, especially South America.

Meat 1/: Summary of Apparent Consumption in Specified Areas in 1955, with Comparisons

Area	average 1946-50	1953	1954 2/	1955 2/	Percentage Change 1946-50 to 1955	Percentage Change 1954 to 1955
	Mil. lbs.	Mil. lbs.	Mil. lbs.	Mil. lbs.		
North America 3/	24,651	27,634	28,294	30,352	+23	+7
Europe 4/	18,241	23,180	24,808	25,876	+42	+4
South America 5/	7,596	7,720	7,746	7,203	- 5	-7
Oceania 6/	2,065	2,276	2,500	2,579	+25	+3

1/ Carcass meat basis - includes beef, veal, mutton, lamb, goat and horsemeat, excludes edible variety meat, lard, rabbit and poultry meat. 2/ Preliminary. 3/ Includes Canada, Mexico, United States and Cuba. 4/ Includes Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia. 5/ Includes Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. 6/ Includes Australia and New Zealand.

MEAT 1/: Consumption in specified countries, average 1946-50, annual 1954 and 1955

Countries	Production			Net trade + Imports - Exports			Apparent consumption			Per capita consumption		
	Average 1946-50	1954 2/	1955 2/	Average 1946-50	1954 2/	1955 2/	Average 1946-50	1954 2/	1955 2/	Average 1946-50	1954 2/	1955 2/
	- Million pounds -			- Million pounds -			- Million pounds -			- Pounds -		
NORTH AMERICA												
Canada 3/	2,053	2,203	2,332	- 354	- 104	- 36	1,699	2,099	2,296	128	143	146
Mexico	1,035	1,156	1,162	- 56	- 44	- 28	979	1,112	1,134	41	39	38
United States 4/	22,262	25,214	26,895	- 125	+ 241	+ 204	21,535	24,607	26,423	147	153	161
Cuba	414	454	467	+ 24	+ 22	+ 32	438	476	499	85	80	83
EUROPE												
Austria 5/	407	674	696	+ 36	- 3	+ 5	443	671	701	64	96	100
Belgium	559	840	864	+ 165	+ 9	+ 8	724	849	872	85	96	98
Denmark	882	1,363	1,419	- 355	- 829	- 869	527	534	550	126	121	124
Finland	220	279	266	+ 3	- 14	- 2	223	265	264	57	63	62
France	3,613	5,269	5,435	+ 69	- 91	- 44	3,682	5,178	5,391	90	121	125
Germany, Western 6/	2,705	4,722	5,078	+ 140	+ 99	+ 100	2,845	4,821	5,178	61	97	104
Greece 6/	161	204	214	+ 32	+ 15	+ 33	193	219	247	24	28	31
Ireland	327	474	429	- 53	- 215	- 146	274	259	283	92	88	97
Italy	1,296	1,766	1,750	+ 49	+ 54	+ 104	1,345	1,820	1,854	29	38	39
Netherlands	555	1,115	1,222	+ 30	- 232	- 289	585	883	933	60	83	87
Norway	193	248	278	+ 5	- 3	- 18	198	245	260	62	72	76
Portugal	324	364	372	+ 6	- 6	- 3	330	358	369	40	41	42
Sweden	637	722	774	+ 30	+ 54	+ 5	667	776	779	97	108	107
Switzerland	336	444	447	+ 25	+ 12	+ 27	361	456	474	79	93	95
United Kingdom 3/	2,035	3,699	3,507	+3,031	+2,967	+3,356	5,066	6,666	6,863	101	120	128
Yugoslavia	784	855	891	- 6	- 47	- 33	778	808	858	49	47	49
SOUTH AMERICA												
Argentina	5,215	4,514	4,791	-1,309	- 886	-1,209	3,906	3,628	3,582	239	194	187
Brazil 7/	2,695	3,033	2,602	- 133	+ 14	- 21	2,562	3,047	2,581	52	53	44
Chile	444	330		- 12	- 2	- 1	432	328		79	51	
Paraguay	230	210		- 41	- 10		189	200		147	131	
Uruguay	743	827	577	- 236	- 284	- 59	507	543	518	219	212	199
AFRICA												
Union of So. Africa	917	1,025	970	+ 12	- 4	- 2	929	1,021	968	78	76	71
OCEANIA												
Australia 3/	2,137	2,682	2,786	- 491	- 625	- 668	1,646	2,057	2,118	201	213	211
New Zealand 3/8/	1,201	1,264	1,348	- 782	- 821	- 887	419	443	461	212	211	216

1/ Carcass meat basis - includes beef, veal, pork, mutton, lamb, goat and horsement; excludes edible variety meats, lard, rabbit and poultry meat. 2/ Preliminary. 3/ Excludes horsement. Per capita consumption figures take into account changes in storage stocks. For Canada, per capita consumption is civilian consumption only. 4/ Excludes horsemeat - consumption estimates take into account changes in commercial stocks and include military consumption. Per capita consumption is civilian consumption only. 5/ Production and consumption estimates include some game, rabbit meat and poultry. 6/ Average for less than five years. 7/ Excludes farm production and consumption. 8/ Production data are for years ending September 30.

Livestock and Meat Products Division
December 1956.

Per capita meat supplies in 1956 were even larger than in 1955 in a number of countries including the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Argentina and Western Europe as a whole. But consumption per person in Australia was less than in 1955. There probably was a reduction in domestic use in Denmark reflecting a decline of about 10 percent in hog slaughter by the bacon factories.

As usual the highest levels of consumption per person in the world were attained in the principal exporting countries, except Denmark. Per capita consumption in New Zealand during 1955 was estimated to be 216 pounds, Uruguay 199, and Argentina 187 pounds. Consumption in Argentina and Uruguay was at a lower level than usual as a result of low meat production.

Per capita civilian consumption in the United States was estimated at 161 pounds in 1955. This was 8 pounds greater than a year earlier and had only been exceeded by the 163.3 pounds consumed in 1908, the highest in records dating back to 1899. Consumption rose further in 1956 and for the year as a whole is now estimated at 163.5 pounds. In the past several years there has been a sharp increase in consumption of beef as beef production has continued to rise to new record levels.

In the United Kingdom consumption per person averaged 128 pounds in 1955 compared with 126 pounds in prewar and was the highest for any postwar year. In France consumption averaged 125 pounds and in Denmark 124 pounds. Supplies per person in 1955 ranged down to as low as 42 pounds in Portugal, 39 pounds in Italy and 31 pounds in Greece.

In comparison with earlier years, the 1955 per capita meat supplies were unusually large in Canada, the United States, Austria, Belgium, France, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. Consumption per person was relatively larger than usual in the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia. But during 1955 consumption was smaller than usual in Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and the Union of South Africa.

Consumption of meat in Canada has risen steadily since the war. The largest gain was in pork consumption which in 1955 was 18.2 pounds per capita more than in prewar, a gain of 46 percent. The stable per capita beef consumption for 1954 and 1955 is a reflection of the fact that Canada is now consuming about all the beef it produces and may be a net importer in 1956. In 1956 Canadian meat production reached its largest peace-time volume. Domestic disappearance of meat was around 10 percent greater than a year earlier. At the end of 1956 the livestock industry was in a healthy position with every prospect that continued high consumer demand would absorb the 1957 marketings of all kinds of meat.

Canada: Per Capita Civilian Consumption of Meat

Item	average 1935-39	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
			Pounds			
Beef(C.W.E.)	54.7	48.9	44.6	64.6	72.0	72.0
Veal(C.W.E.)	10.5	7.5	6.1	8.2	10.1	8.8
Lamb & Mutton(C.W.E.)	5.6	2.1	1.9	2.4	2.5	2.8
Pork(C.W.E.)	39.8	60.9	63.2	55.0	53.7	58.0
Canned Meat(C.W.E.)	1.7	5.8	8.8	5.2	4.4	4.2
Total Converted to C.W.E.	112.3	125.2	125.2	135.4	142.7	145.8
Variety Meats	5.8	4.8	5.4	5.1	5.3	5.7

Compared with prewar, consumption of fresh pork and canned meats have increased sharply in the United Kingdom. There has been a moderate decrease in consumption of mutton and lamb and of bacon and ham. But use of beef and veal per person is considerably below prewar. Net imports accounted for 49 percent of the meat consumed in 1955 compared with 60 percent in 1946-50.

Meat supplies continued to increase in the United Kingdom in 1956. Imports of carcass and variety meats in January-October totaled 13 percent more than a year earlier. During that period domestic beef production increased 13 percent and mutton and lamb 18 percent. However, pork production during January-October 1956 was 4 percent less than a year earlier and bacon output declined 14 percent.

United Kingdom: Per Capita Consumption of Meat

Item	average 1934-38	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
			Pounds			
Beef & Veal(C.W.E.)	54.9	33.7	32.4	36.8	43.9	46.2
Mutton & Lamb(C.W.E.)	25.2	15.4	21.4	24.2	21.6	24.4
Pork(C.W.E.)	10.6	4.5	7.9	12.1	17.8	18.4
Bacon & Ham(Prod.Wt.)	28.1	19.4	22.9	24.9	25.0	25.1
Canned Corned Meat (Prod.Wt.)	2.1	1.7	.1	.7	7.6	8.5
Other Canned Meat (Prod.Wt.)	1.0	8.4	8.7	5.6		
Total(C.W.E.)1/	125.9	88.7	97.0	107.5	120.0	127.9
Variety Meats	7.4	6.7	6.8	6.5	7.8	7.8

1/ Converted to carcass weight equivalent.

The per capita consumption of meat in Australia and New Zealand was the highest in the world in 1955. Meat production and consumption were relatively low in Argentina and Uruguay. Consumption per capita in Australia during 1954-55 averaged 211 pounds compared with 213 a year earlier and 245 pounds in prewar. Consumption of mutton and lamb averaged 76.2 pounds per person, beef 114.9 pounds and pork, bacon and hams 17.7 pounds. Consumption in 1955-56 declined slightly to around 209 pounds. All of the reduction was the consumption of mutton.

Consumption of 216.4 pounds of meat during 1955 in New Zealand was 5.4 pounds more than a year earlier and 4.4 more than the prewar average. During 1955 consumption of lamb and mutton averaged 80.2 pounds per person, beef 100.2 pounds and pork 29.9 pounds.

Australia: Per Capita Consumption of Meat
Year Ended June 30

Item	average 1937-39	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
			Pounds			
Beef & Veal(C.W.E.)	144.1	131.6	118.9	119.7	114.6	114.9
Mutton(C.W.E.)	59.8	38.4	40.9	49.5	51.4	50.4
Lamb(C.W.E.)	15.0	24.6	24.0	28.8	26.9	25.8
Pork(C.W.E.)	10.4	6.8	7.3	5.8	7.7	9.8
Bacon & Ham(Prod.Wt.)	15.7	8.3	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.9
Canned Meat(Prod.Wt.)	1/	3.2	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.0
Total C.W.E.	244.6	217.8	205.7	217.4	212.6	210.8
Variety Meats	8.4	8.8	9.1	10.3	10.6	10.7

1/ Included under fresh meat at its carcass weight equivalent.

There was a further rise in meat consumption in New Zealand in 1956. Consumption of all meats (carcass weight basis) averaged 223.6 pounds per person. Beef consumption rose by 4.8 pounds but there were only minor changes in consumption of the other types of carcass meats. Consumption of variety meats declined from 10.3 to 9.2 pounds per person. Total production of meat, including edible variety meats in New Zealand during the year ending September 30, 1956 was 5 percent greater than a year earlier.

New Zealand: Per Capita Consumption of Meat
Year Ended September 30

Item	average 1937-39	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
			Pounds			
Beef(C.W.E.)	112.0	115.1	109.9	102.4	102.6	100.2
Veal(C.W.E.)	7.5	5.7	5.8	5.0	5.8	6.1
Mutton(C.W.E.)	60.0	64.1	66.2	66.0	66.8	71.0
Lamb(C.W.E.)	6.5	11.1	10.5	9.6	8.5	9.2
Pork(C.W.E.)	9.0	11.4	10.5	8.2	11.3	13.1
Bacon & Ham(C.W.E.)	17.0	20.6	16.8	14.1	16.0	16.8
Total C.W.E.	212.0	228.0	219.7	205.3	211.0	216.4
Variety Meats	9.0	9.8	9.6	9.0	10.3	10.3

Beef accounts for a very large share of the meat produced and consumed in Argentina. Consumption of 164 pounds of beef per person in 1955 amounted to 88 percent of all types of meat eaten.

There was a sharp decline in per capita consumption of beef and mutton from 1952 to 1955 chiefly because of lower production of these meats. Consumption of mutton and lamb per person of 7 pounds in 1955 was only half as large as in 1952. Consumption of pork per person has been about average for recent years. Production has been about average but exports have been relatively small. Consumption of beef rose in 1956 as production increased sharply.

Consumer meat prices in Argentina are lower than they ordinarily would be due to the subsidies paid to packers and price ceilings. If all of these subsidies were removed there would probably be a substantial rise in prices. But since meat is a major cost of living item in the country there is a reluctance to withdraw the subsidies even though the current rise in beef production and consumption is making it easier to bring about an adjustment of this kind.

Argentina: Per Capita Consumption of Meat

Item	average 1934-38	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
			Pounds			
Beef & Veal(C.W.E.)	176	203	203	181	173	164
Lamb & Mutton(C.W.E.)	19	14	14	9	6	7
Pork(C.W.E.)	20	16	13	16	15	16
Total Meat(C.W.E.)	215	233	230	206	194	187

In Denmark there has been a tendency for consumption of pork to rise and for consumption of beef to fall off. Pork consumption per person was estimated to be 83 pounds in 1955, beef and veal consumption 38 pounds and the other meats 3 pounds. By contrast, in prewar pork consumption averaged

69 pounds, beef and veal 59 pounds and the other meats 132 pounds. From 1952 to 1955 there was a steady rise in meat consumption in Denmark at the same time that meat exports continued at unusually high levels.

Denmark: Per Capita Consumption of Meat 1/

Item	average 1935-39	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
			Pounds			
Beef & Veal(C.W.E.)	59	36	33	33	33	38
Pork(Excl. Lard)(C.W.E.)	69	68	71	80	83	83
Mutton & Lamb(C.W.E.)	2	1	1	1	1	1
Horsemeat(C.W.E.)	2	3	3	4	4	2
Total Meat(C.W.E.)	132	108	108	118	121	124

1/ Official estimates of consumption adjusted to exclude estimated consumption of variety meats.

The notable feature of meat consumption in the United States in recent years has been the record consumption of beef. Consumption per person increased from 61.4 pounds in 1952 to 80.9 pounds in 1955 and rose to even higher levels in 1956. From 1952 to 1955 consumption of all meats per capita increased from 144.0 to 160.7 pounds.

During 1955 about half of the meat consumed in the United States was beef and 6 percent was veal. Forty-one percent of the meat eaten was pork. The remaining 3 percent was lamb and mutton.

United States: Per Capita Consumption of Meat

Item	average 1935-39	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
			Pounds			
Beef(C.W.E.)	54.8	55.3	61.4	76.5	79.0	80.9
Veal(C.W.E.)	8.1	6.5	7.1	9.4	9.9	9.3
Lamb & Mutton(C.W.E.)	6.7	3.4	4.1	4.6	4.5	4.6
Pork(C.W.E.)	55.7	70.9	71.4	62.6	59.2	65.9
Total(C.W.E.)	125.3	136.1	144.0	153.1	152.6	160.7
Canned Meat 1/	-	8.8	9.3	9.8	9.6	10.1
Variety Meats 2/	-	9.8	10.1	10.7	10.5	10.8

1/ Product weight; included in appropriate category above. 2/ Estimates of variety meat production are based on fixed percentages of production of carcass meat by types. For method of calculating per capita supplies see the Livestock and Meat Situation, July 1956, page 15.